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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1477
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0119
RUEAHL/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/DIRJIATF SOUTH PRIORITY
RUEPWJF/HQ BICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP PRIORITY 0357
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 0166
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// PRIORITY
RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 TEGUCIGALPA 000524

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR S, D, E, AND P
STATE FOR WHA, WHA/PPC, WHA/EPSC, AND WHA/CEN
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAM
NSC FOR DAN FISK
TREASURY FOR DDOUGLASS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2036

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [KCRM](#) [PINR](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: ZELAYA ADMINISTRATION'S FIRST 45 DAYS - PRO-U.S.
ZELAYA OFTEN TORN IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS BY ADVISORS

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 521 (FUEL)

- [1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 505 (FUEL)
- [1](#)C. TEGUCIGALPA 482 (FUEL)
- [1](#)D. TEGUCIGALPA 355 (PRC/TAIWAN)
- [1](#)E. TEGUCIGALPA 344 (AGRICULTURE)
- [1](#)F. TEGUCIGALPA 214 (PRC/TAIWAN)
- [1](#)G. 092106Z MAR 06 USDAO TEGUCIGALPA HO (MOD)
- [1](#)H. TEGUCIGALPA 433 (CRIME)
- [1](#)I. TEGUCIGALPA 193(ZELAYA/GONZALES BILAT)
- [1](#)J. TEGUCIGALPA 161 (ZELAYA BRIEFINGS)
- [1](#)K. TEGUCIGALPA 100 (ZELAYA/FORD BILAT)
- [1](#)L. 05 TEGUCIGALPA 2492 (POL ASSESSMENT)

TEGUCIGALP 00000524 001.2 OF 006

- [1](#)M. 05 TEGUCIGALPA 2420 (ECON ASSESSMENT)
- [1](#)N. 05 TEGUCIGALPA 2419 (ECON ASSESSMENT)
- [1](#)O. 05 TEGUCIGALPA 2418 (ECON ASSESSMENT)

Classified By: Ambassador Charles A. Ford;
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Honduran President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya and his Administration have now been in office approximately 45 days. While Zelaya is clearly a friend of the USG, as Post predicted his personality, administration, and policy decisions are making working with him a challenge. On the plus side, Zelaya has moved with resolve to conclude CAFTA for an April 1 implementation, supports USG efforts on counter-narcotics, has cooperated on deportation issues, and has accepted U.S. DOD assistance in drafting a Honduran National Security Strategy, with a workshop for his Administration planned for May 5-7. However, there has been no progress on reforming Immigration, crime appears to have worsened, and economic policy is a mixed bag, which fuel being a particularly controversial issue. Post is also concerned by the attention being paid to the more ideological voices within the Zelaya administration. Some in the Zelaya

Administration may be showing their true colors -- some populist or radical, other merely concerned with protecting their business interests. Zelaya strikes us as a pro-U.S. political pragmatist, but one somewhat beholden to the competing forces within his party. Ambassador and Zelaya had a lengthy discussion March 14 (hosted by Former President Carlos Flores) to try to clear the air and improve bilateral communication. While communication will hopefully improve, Zelaya must take a more active leadership role if he seeks to establish rational policymaking in his Administration. End Summary.

Pressure From Different Camps in Liberal Party

12. (C) The Ambassador and the Country Team have established a close working relationship with President Zelaya and his cabinet. As President-elect, Zelaya and three of his advisors met on January 20 with the Country Team at the Embassy for a one-hour country briefing followed by a half-hour session dedicated specifically to CAFTA (ref J). This meeting came after a January 11 Country Team briefing of several of Zelaya's designated ministers, and a January 13 luncheon meeting between the Ambassador, DCM, and the President-elect and his private secretary, Raul Valladares (ref K). President Zelaya has also held meetings with the Ambassador several times at the Ambassador's residence, both before and after his inauguration. From day one, Zelaya has relished the idea of meeting President Bush (a meeting is tentatively set for June) and he literally made the Central American presidents and Mexican President Vicente Fox wait outside while he made Attorney General Gonzales the first official meeting of his presidency (ref I). Even before that, with one day's notice he brought his most senior leadership to San Pedro Sula to see R U/S Hughes and WHA Assistant Secretary Shannon, and he changed his Foreign Minister-designee at the Ambassador's request. There has been a consistent thread in Zelaya administration, whether

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